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RUEHMR RUEHPA RUEHRN RUEHROV RUEHTRO
DE RUEHNJ #0165/01 1301509
ZNR UUUUU ZZH
O 101509Z MAY 09
FM AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6909
INFO RUCNFUR/DARFUR COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHEE/ARAB LEAGUE COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHZO/AFRICAN UNION COLLECTIVE PRIORITY
RUEHDO/AMEMBASSY DOHA PRIORITY 0026
RUEHTRO/AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI PRIORITY 0617
RUEH KI/AMEMBASSY KINSHASA PRIORITY 0227
RUEHBZ/AMEMBASSY BRAZZAVILLE PRIORITY 0055
RHMFISS/HQ USAFRICOM STUTTGART GE PRIORITY

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 NDJAMENA 000165

SIPDIS
SENSITIVE

KHARTOUM FOR SE GRATION
STATE FOR AF/C, AF/USSES, S/ES-O, DS/CC, DS/IP/AF, DS/OSAC,
CA/OSC/ASC
NSC FOR GAVIN AND HUDSON
LONDON FOR POL -- LORD
PARIS FOR POL -- D'ELIA AND KANEDA
ADDIS ABABA ALSO FOR AU

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [MOPS](#) [ASEC](#) [PREL](#) [PREF](#) [SU](#) [UN](#) [AU](#) [LY](#) [FR](#) [CASC](#) [CD](#)
SUBJECT: CHAD UPDATE 5/10: GOC TRUMPETS DECISIVE VICTORY
OVER REBELS; PONDERERS CUTTING TIES WITH KHARTOUM

REF: A. NDJAMENA 163
[1](#)B. NDJAMENA 161 AND PREVIOUS

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[1](#)1. (SBU) MILITARY BALANCE: As of May 10, the Government of Chad (GOC) continues to trumpet its "decisive victory" over Union of Resistance Forces (UFR) rebels in southeastern Chad.

On May 6 and 7, Chadian military forces bombed rebel columns near Koukou, Angarana, Kerfi, and Haouish. According to our best sources, the Chadian National Army (ANT) converged May 7 on Am-Dam from Mongo to the west and Abeche to the east and battled the rebels for two hours. ANT forces also took out another rebel column located to the south of Am-Dam the night of May 7 and into the day of May 8. Rebels who escaped the battles fled south, but have been pursued by ANT forces who continue to "mop up" remaining UFR fighters. The GOC continues to claim the right to engage in hot pursuit into Sudan if it deems this necessary (see para 5).

[1](#)2. (SBU) According to sources, the ANT has killed 200-some rebels and captured 152 fighters belonging to rebel leaders Mahamat Hamoda Bechir and Sogour Djittou Koua; the ANT also recovered 67 rebel vehicles and destroyed another 73. ANT casualties number 21 deaths, 30 injured, and 7 destroyed vehicles. The casualty totals among rebels may go higher.

[1](#)3. (SBU) SECURITY STATUS IN EASTERN CHAD: Sources continue to state that UFR rebels are scattered and disorganized as they attempt retreat from Chad, despite rebel propaganda claiming the UFR has regrouped. The GOC believes that UFR rebels do not pose any current threat to Chadian security and stability, although there is concern that fleeing rebels could still target humanitarian operations in the east. MINURCAT will redeploy staff May 10 to the IDP camp in Koukou and plans to resume air operations to Goz Beida on May 11. MINURCAT is also hoping to resume all operations and its normal security posture on May 11, but will conduct one more review before making a final decision.

[1](#)4. (SBU) "ENOUGH IS ENOUGH!": Chadian President Idriss Deby Itno assumed a defiant stance toward Sudan in a late May 9

address to heads of Chadian political parties. Deby said that his government was considering severing diplomatic ties with Sudan over Khartoum's backing of the rebel incursion. Deby stated that his government had the means and the right to defend itself and its people and would act accordingly. The President also stated that Sudanese-financed schools and cultural centers would be closed and Sudanese instructors sent home. Further, he empowered a commission, under the Prime Minister's authority, to evaluate next steps vis-a-vis Sudan, including the possibility of severing diplomatic ties.

15. (SBU) Deby did not limit his condemnation to Sudan. He criticized the African Union for having been unable to resolve the Chad-Sudan crisis and indicated that he was inclined to ask the United Nations to undertake mediation. Deby also criticized the "unfriendly" actions of Libya and China during the May 8 UN Security Council meeting (Ref A). Deby asserted that Chad retained the right to go in hot pursuit of Chadian rebels fleeing into Sudan. Deby's address expanded on comments of FM Moussa Faki Mahamat May 8, to the effect that Chad sought peace but could not permit the adventurism of a regime that had violated the international-community norms and spread death and destruction at home as well as in Chad. (Ref A).

16. (SBU) TOUR FOR JOURNALISTS: The GoC invited internationally accredited journalists on an aerial tour of Am-Dam May 8 to display evidence of N'djamena's military victories over rebel forces. Some of those journalists told us that they had witnessed the evacuation of ANT wounded (in the neighborhood of 20-some soldiers) and saw many destroyed vehicles and bodies dispersed over a broad area. Most destruction seemed to have occurred as a result of ground fire rather than aerial bombardments. Rebel weapons seized

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by the ANT were of Chinese origin, and included sophisticated communications equipment and MANPADS. The journalists reported they were turned back from the vicinity of Harouish -- the site of the government's defeat of the second rebel column -- when their escorts heard live fire from the area. Some rebels were not going quietly, said the journalists, although whether the rebels themselves were firing as they left or were being attacked by Chadian troops was not clear. This is consistent with GOC claims to be conducting "mopping up operations" of those rebels still in Chad. If the GoS does not allow Chad rebels back into Sudan, they will seek refuge in northern CAR.

17. (SBU) An Al Jazeera correspondent who traveled to eastern Chad as part of the journalists' delegation stayed on, presumably because he wanted to report on what he found in the region independent of GoC influence. The extent of damage to rebel vehicles suggested that the era of nearly-matched forces was over, and the GoC strength is significantly superior to that of the rebels.

18. (SBU) FRANCE/CHAD: The French Ambassador told us that President Sarkozy called President Deby late May 7 to urge the GOC to exercise restraint in victory and not risk widening the war by pursuing fleeing rebels into Sudan. The French Ambassador repeated those admonitory remarks for FORMIN Faki May 9 (Ref A).

19. (SBU) NDJAMENA CALM: Life in N'Djamena is normal; markets are operating at a usual level of Sunday business; traffic is moving at its Sunday best.

10. (U) Minimize considered.
NIGRO